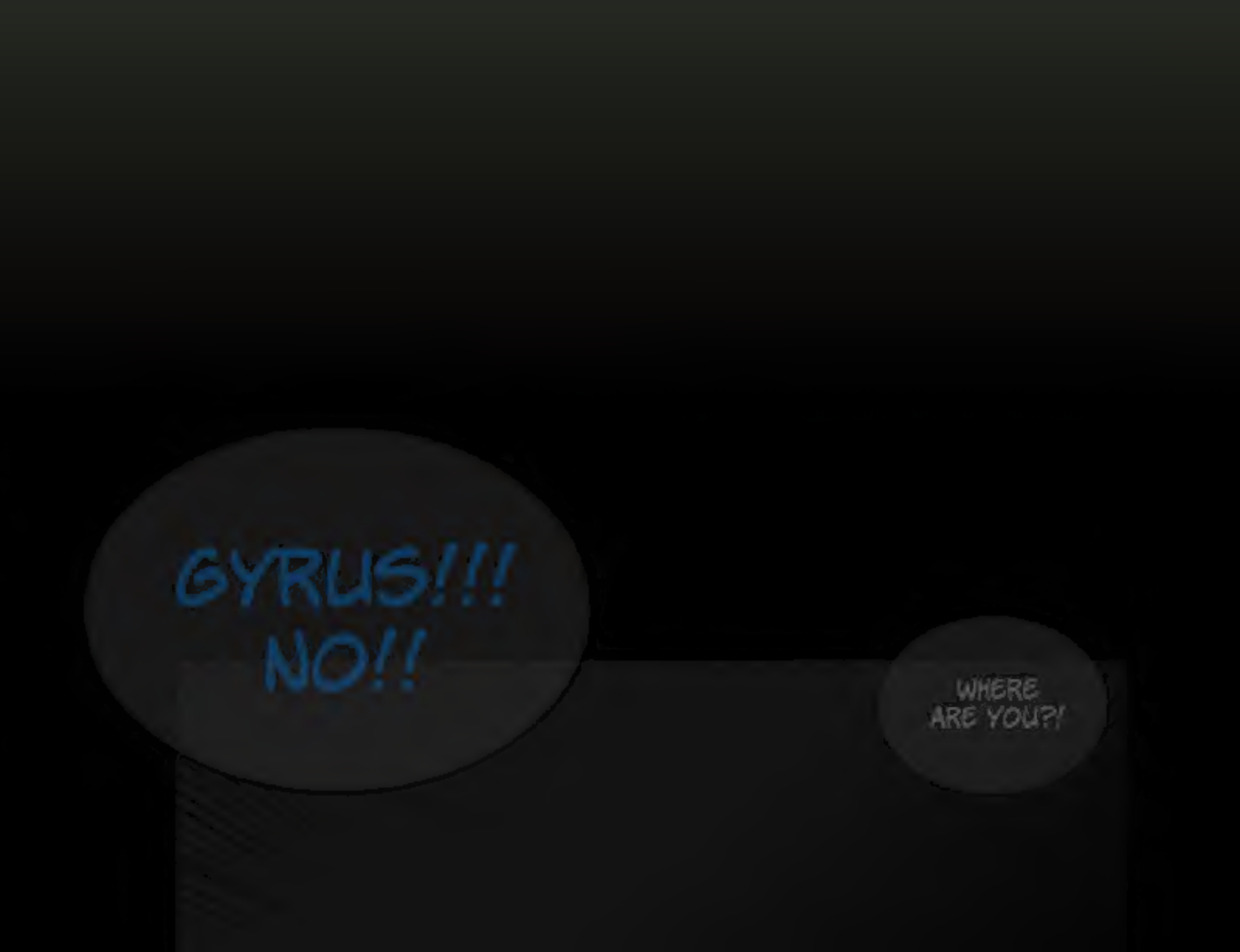
VMMMMMMMMMM

!!
THE IMPLANT IS RESPONDING TO THE ARM?!

DON!?

WHERE'S GYRUS!?

GYRUS!!!


GYRUS!!!
NO!!
WHERE ARE YOU?!

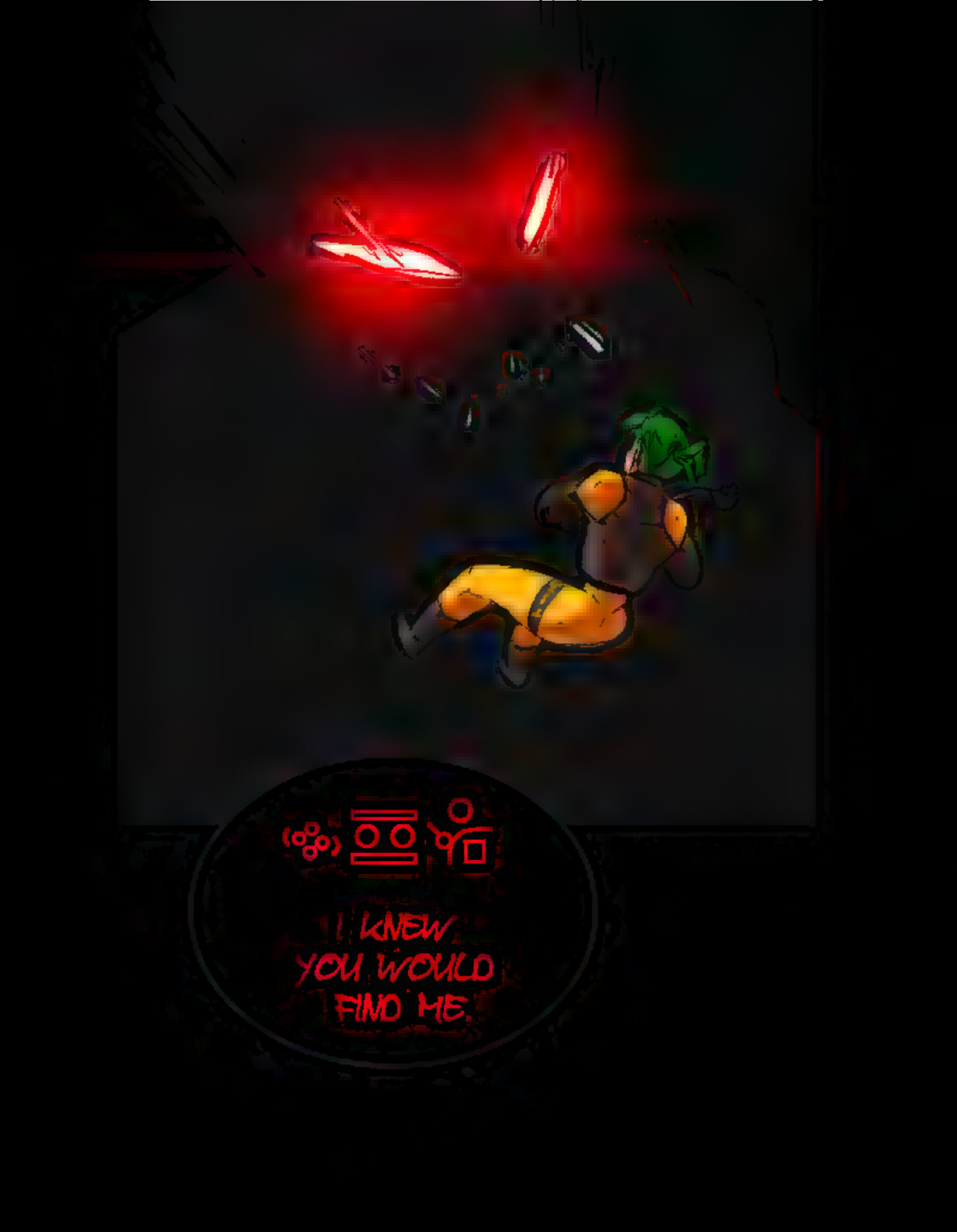
GYRUS?!
GYRUS!!
WHERE AM I?

MY
THOUGHTS ARE
SO LOUD...

STORY/ART: TOONIMATED
CHAPTER 101
"INFINITE SPACE"

I FEEL AS THOUGH I'M BEING WATCHED...

WHO'S THERE?!
OY(oo)...
THERE YOU ARE, TRAVELLER...


I KNEW
YOU WOULD
FIND ME.

L L L
HA HA HA...

I HAD JUST COME FACE-TO-FACE WITH MY DEMONS... SOMETHING THAT I'D ONLY EVER EXPERIENCED IN NIGHTMARES BEFORE NOW.

WHY AM I HERE?!
WHERE DID YOU BRING ME?!

THE PLACE YOU VISIT IN DREAMS...

IF THIS IS A DREAM, WHY CAN'T I WAKE UP?!
COME ON, WAKE UP!!
NOT THIS TIME, TRAVELLER

YOU'VE BEEN ASLEEP A LONG TIME, BUT NOW YOU'RE AWAKE.

WE'VE WAITED A LONG TIME FOR THIS.

IF I GIVE INTO FEAR, I'LL ONLY GIVE IT MORE CONTROL OVER ME.

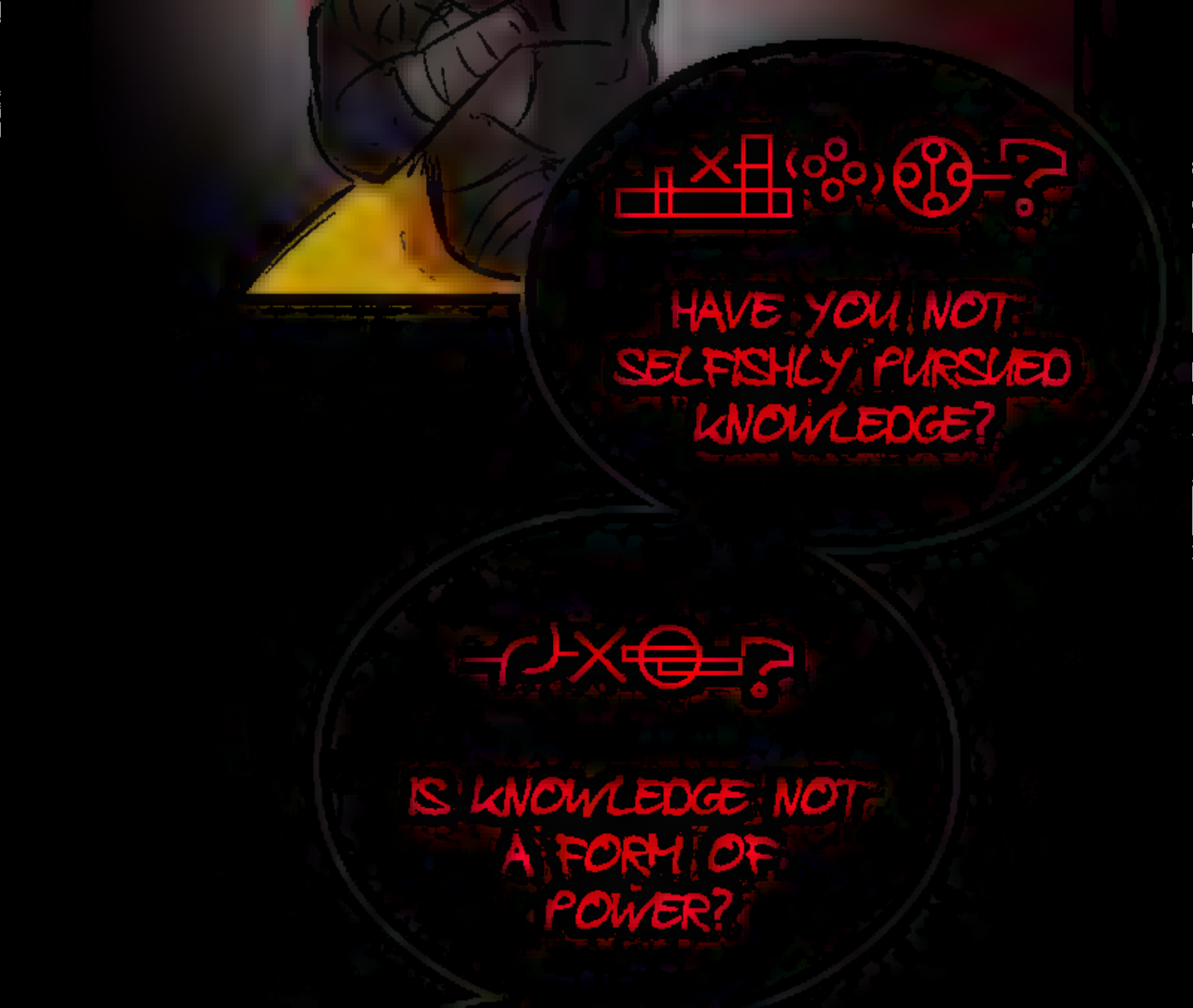
WHAT DO YOU WANT?

TO GIVE YOU
POWER

WE WILL MAKE YOU A GOD.
YOU CAN'T SEDUCE ME WITH POWER!

I WANT NOTHING YOU HAVE TO OFFER!!
UNDERSTAND?! NOTHING!!

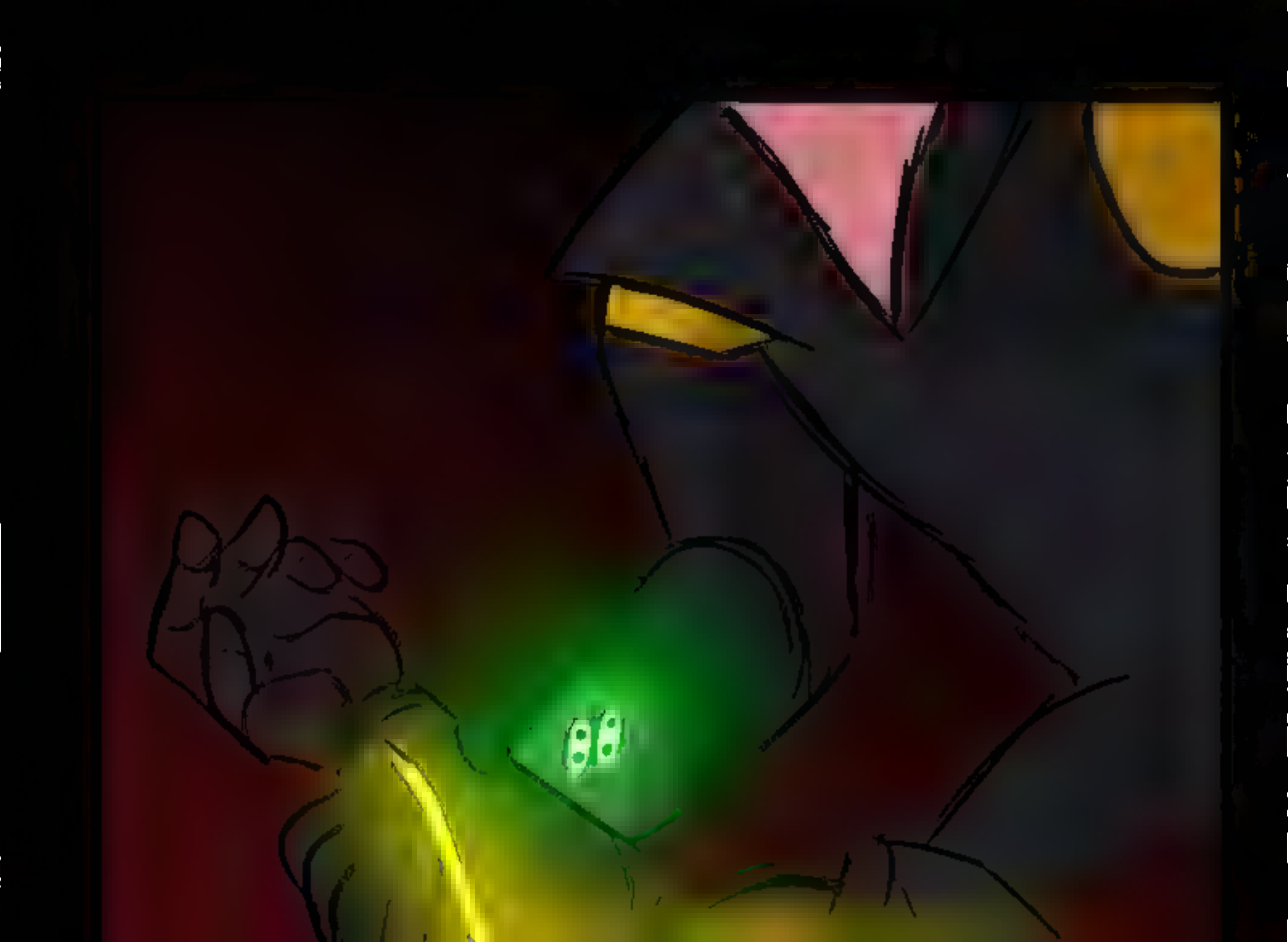
DENYING YOUR OWN DEPRAVITY ONLY GIVES IT ROOM TO GROW FREELY


HAVE YOU NOT SELFISHLY PURSUED KNOWLEDGE?
IS KNOWLEDGE NOT A FORM OF POWER?

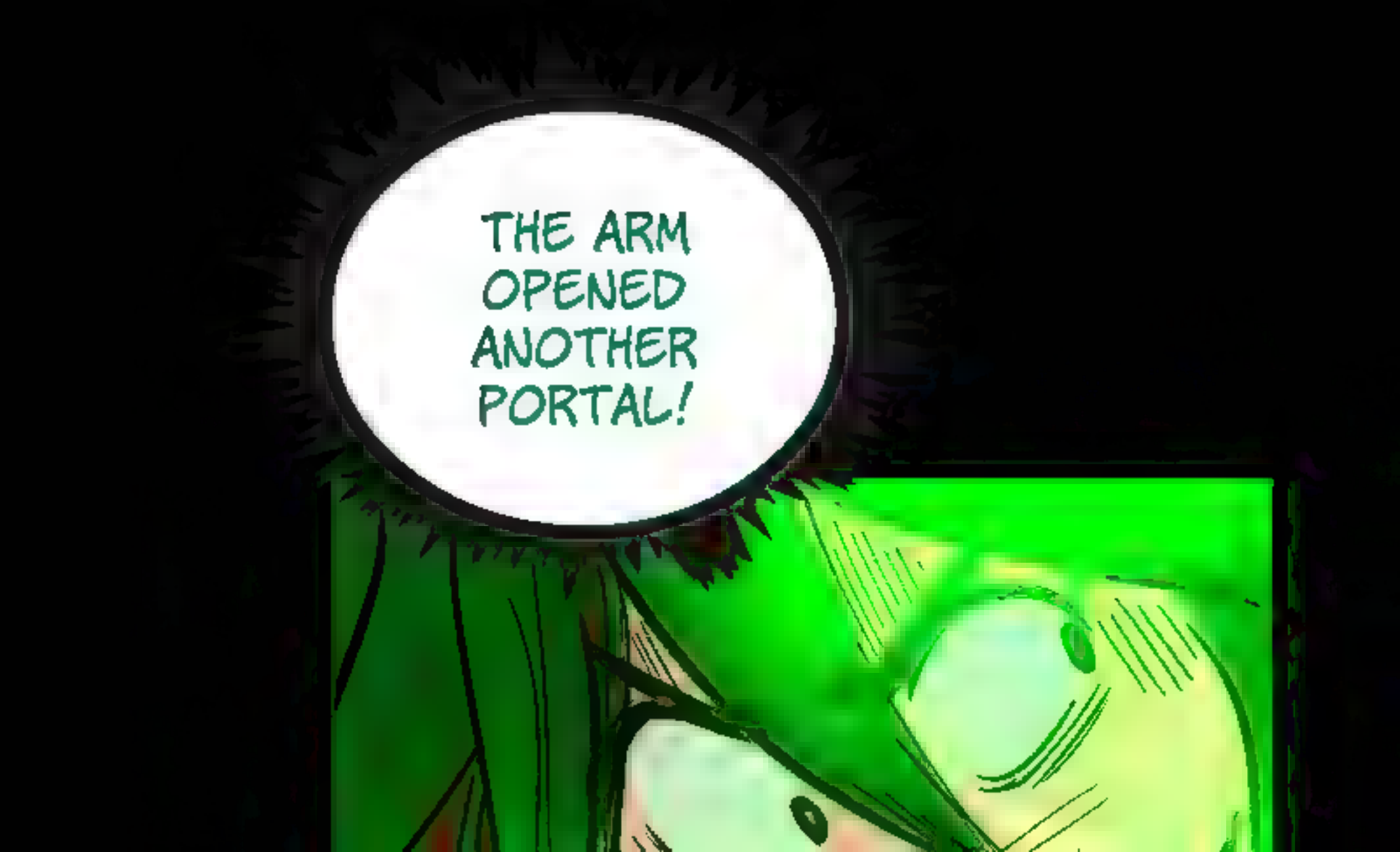
AND WHAT DOES POWER BEGET?
CONTROL.
I'VE NEVER HURT ANYONE BY LEARNING NEW THINGS. I USE KNOWLEDGE TO HELP PEOPLE!

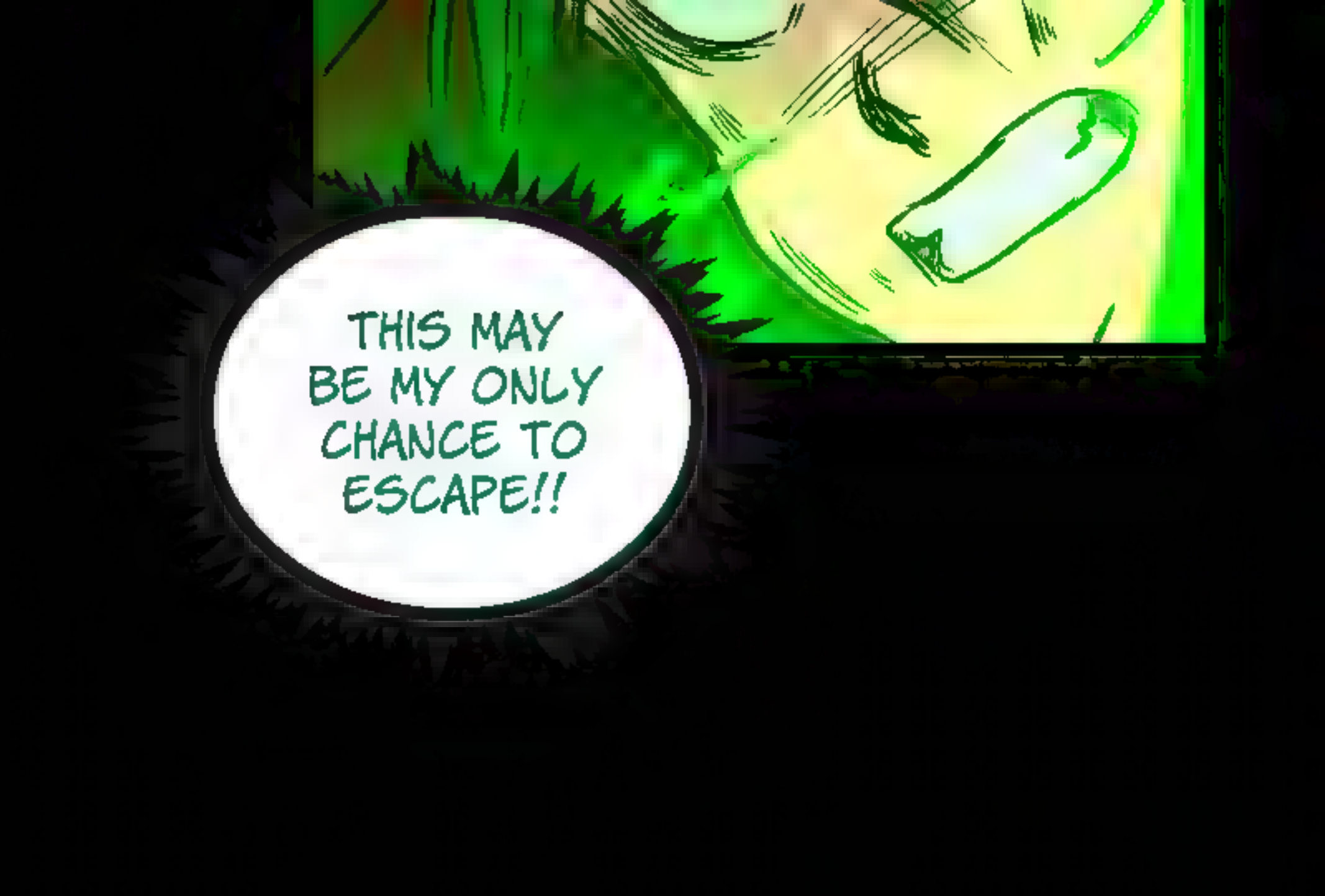
PERHAPS YOU WILL CONFESS TO A MORE UNIVERSAL DESIRE...

FREEDOM!



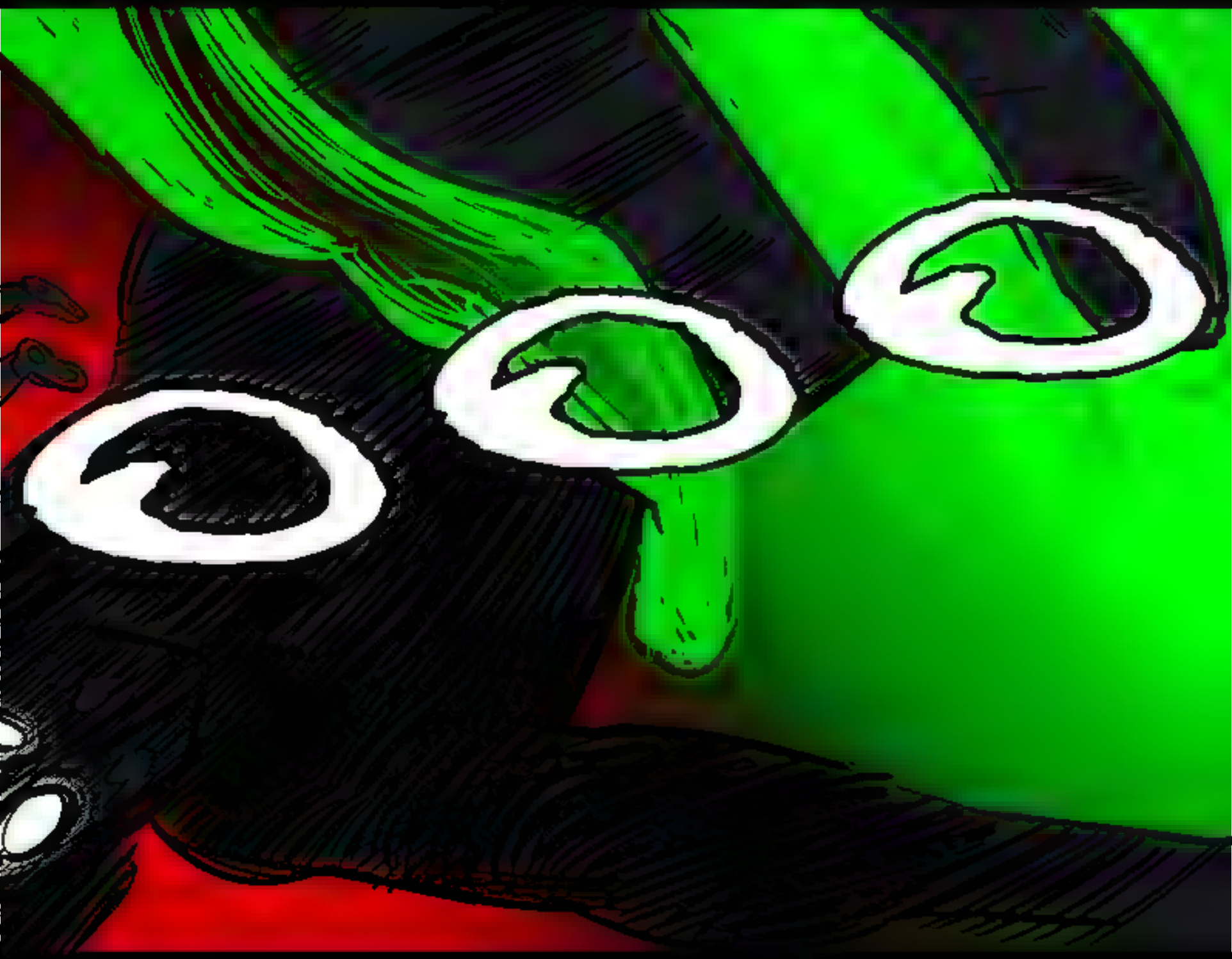
OPEN!!


THE ARM OPENED ANOTHER PORTAL!


THIS MAY BE MY ONLY CHANCE TO ESCAPE!!

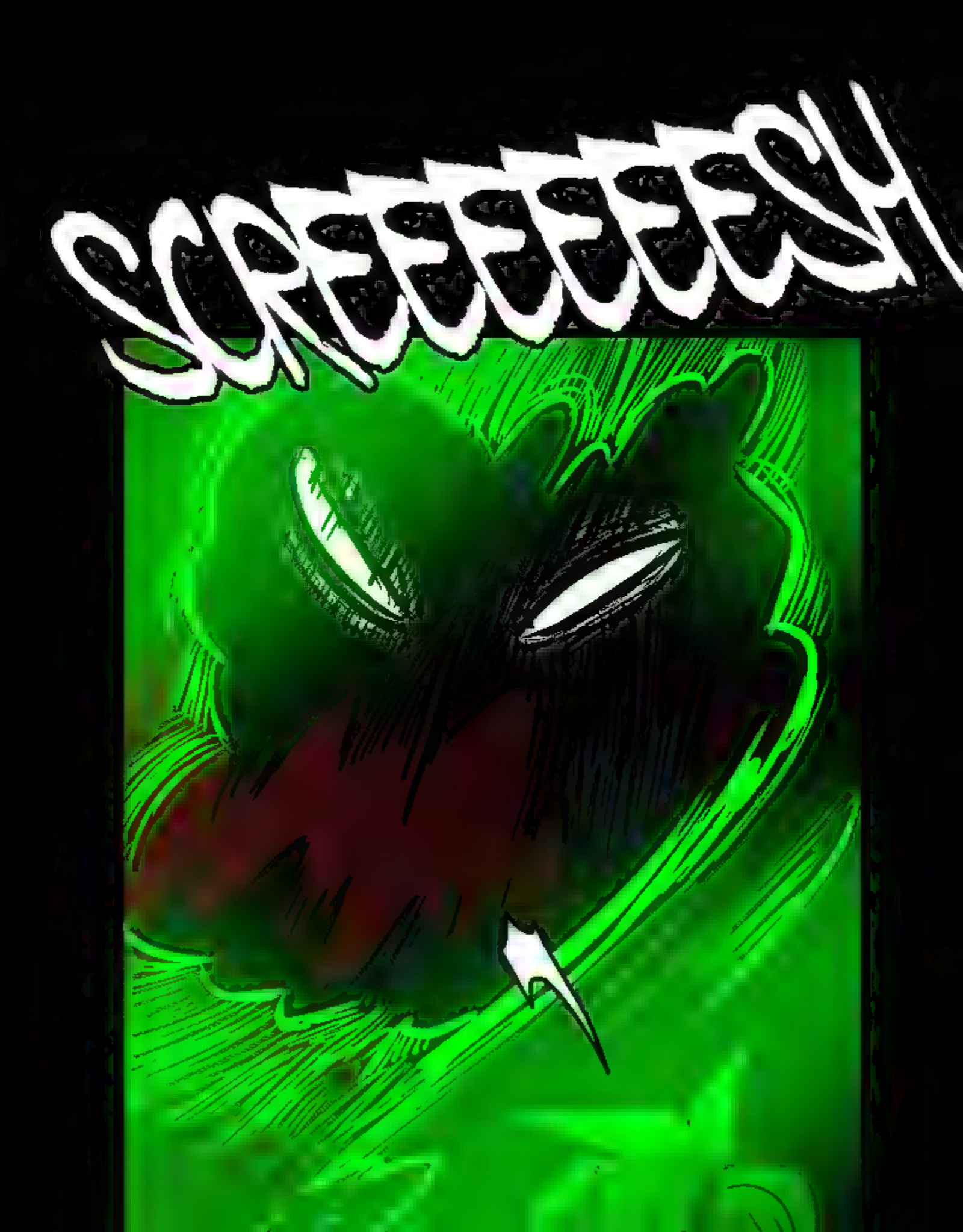
AGH!!!

FWW



OOH

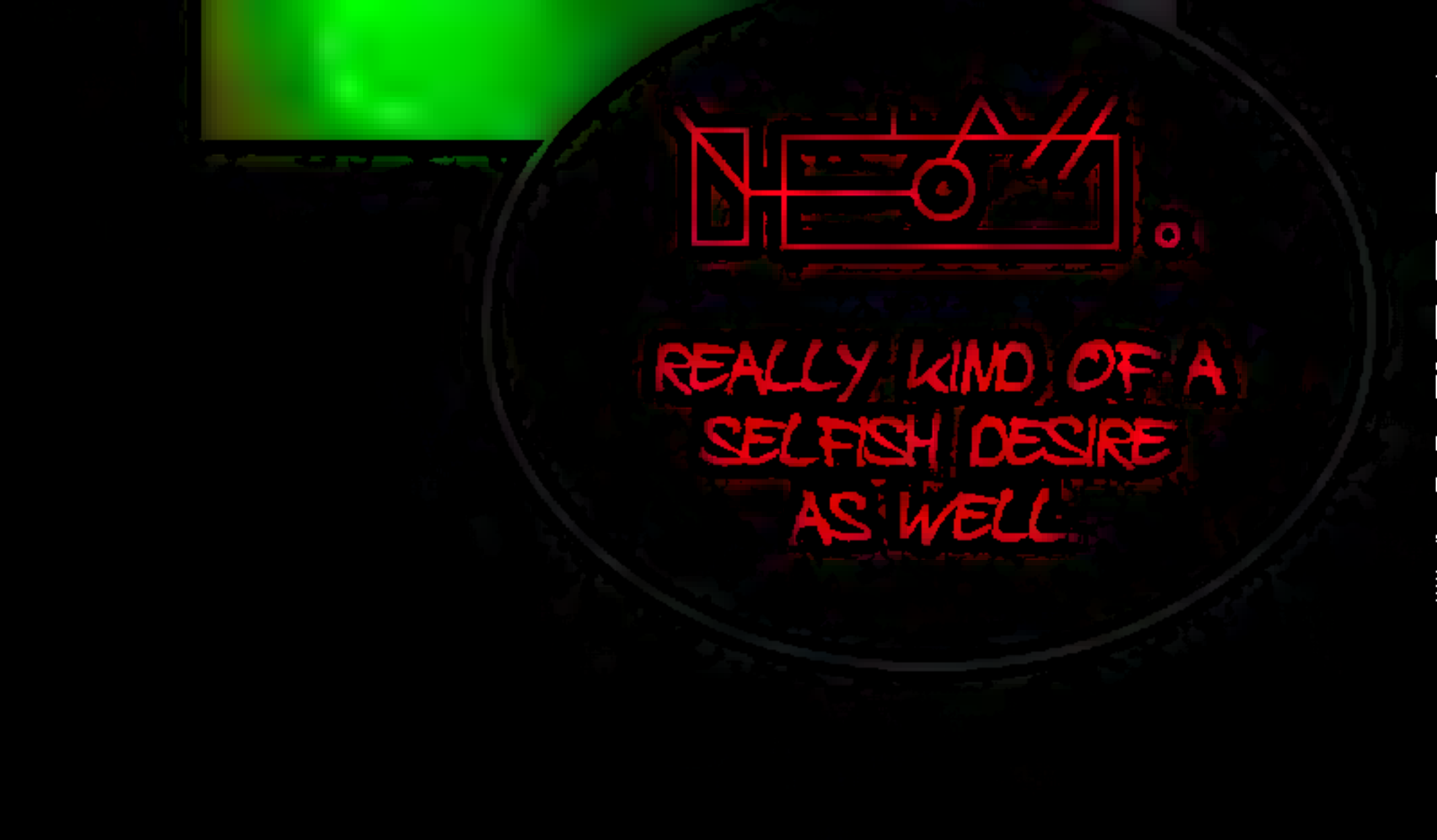
SSSSSS
THAT SHOULD HOLD THEM OFF!


SCREEEEE!

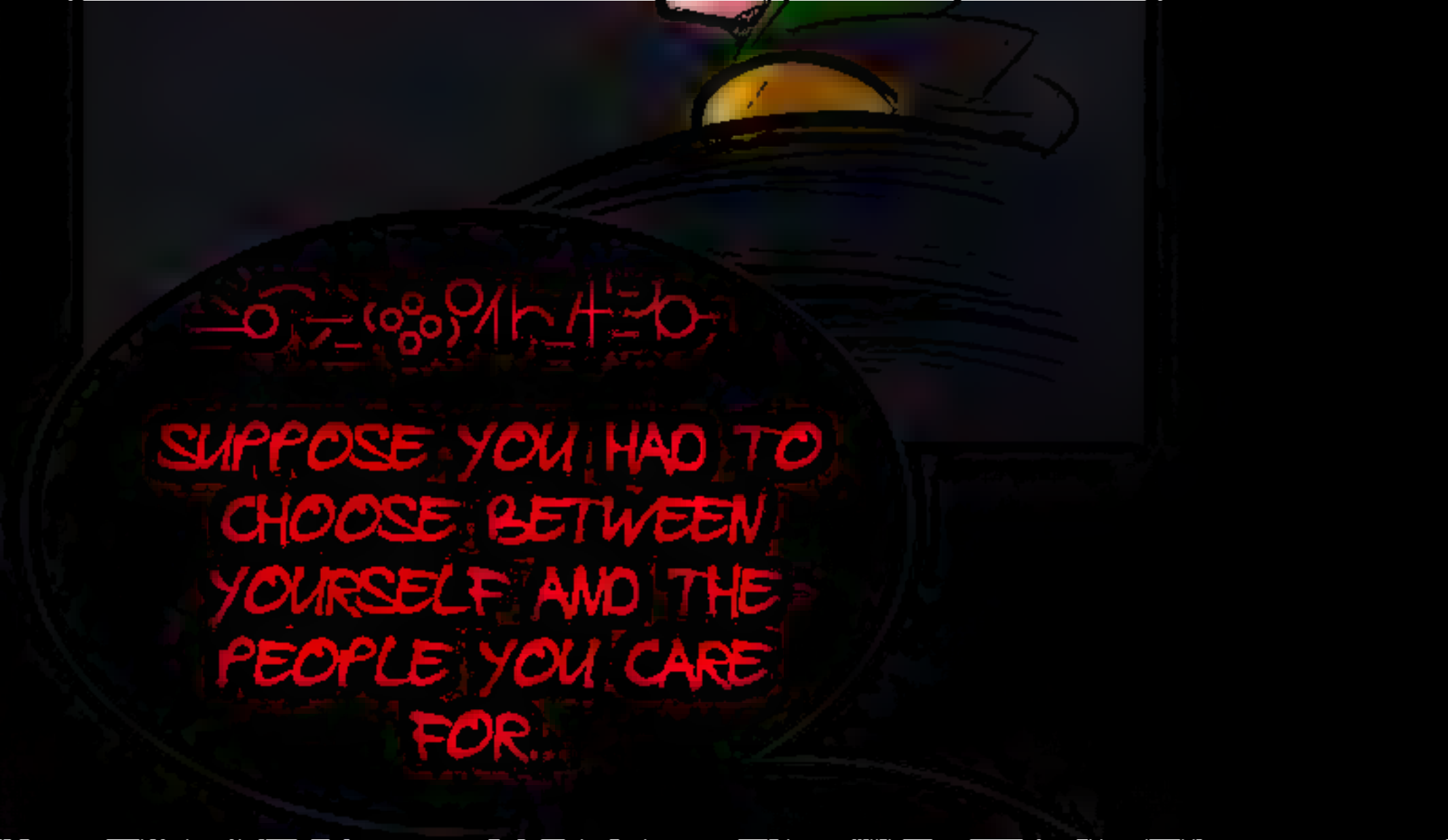
AGH!!!

WRAP
AS WE SUSPECTED..
LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, YOU DESIRE FREEDOM!

KGH...!


REALLY KIND OF A
SELFISH DESIRE
AS WELL.

BUT SINCE YOU LIKE TO HELP PEOPLE.

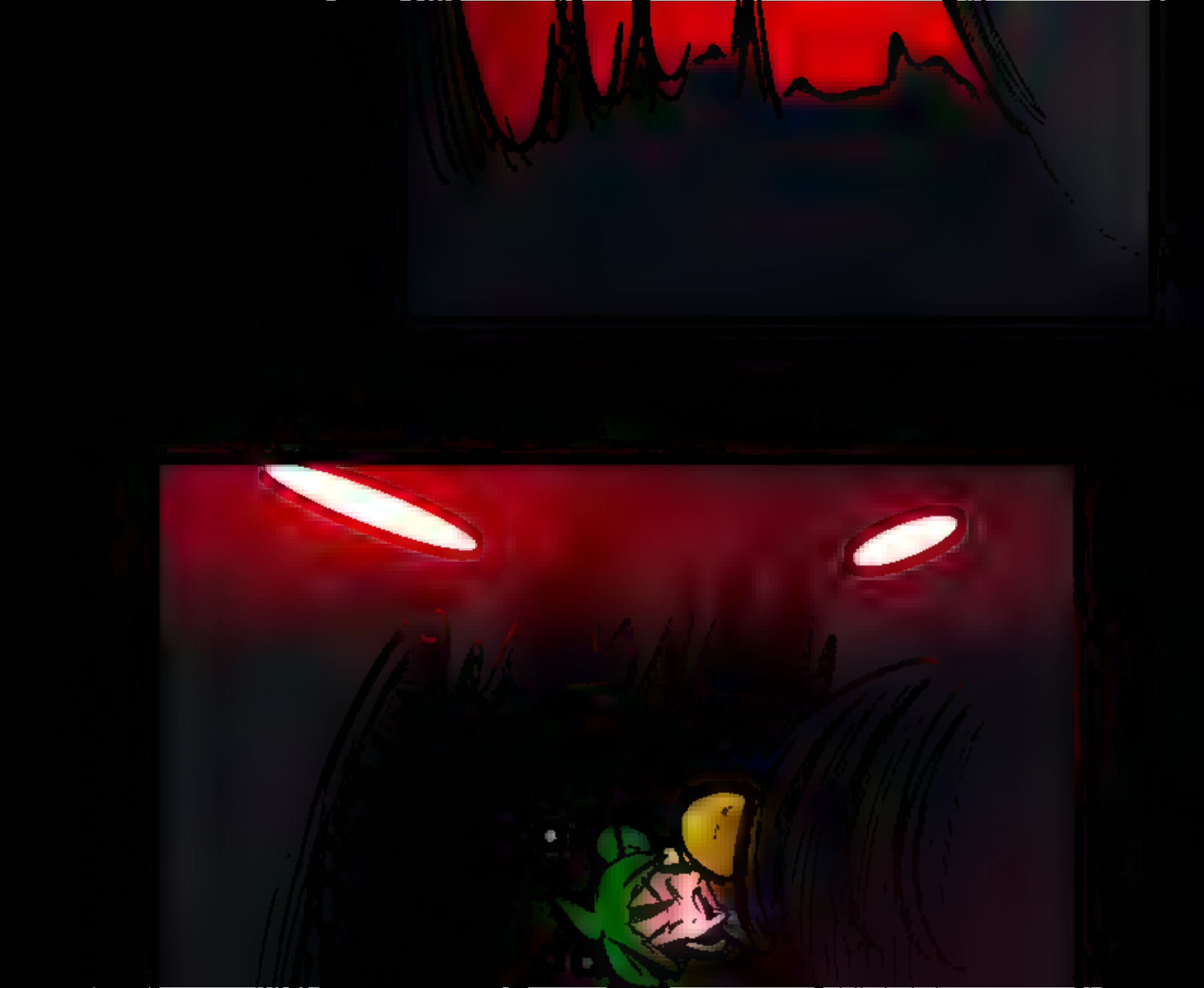

SUPPOSE YOU HAD TO CHOOSE BETWEEN YOURSELF AND THE PEOPLE YOU CARE FOR.

WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR FREEDOM FOR THEM?
O-OF COURSE I WOULD!

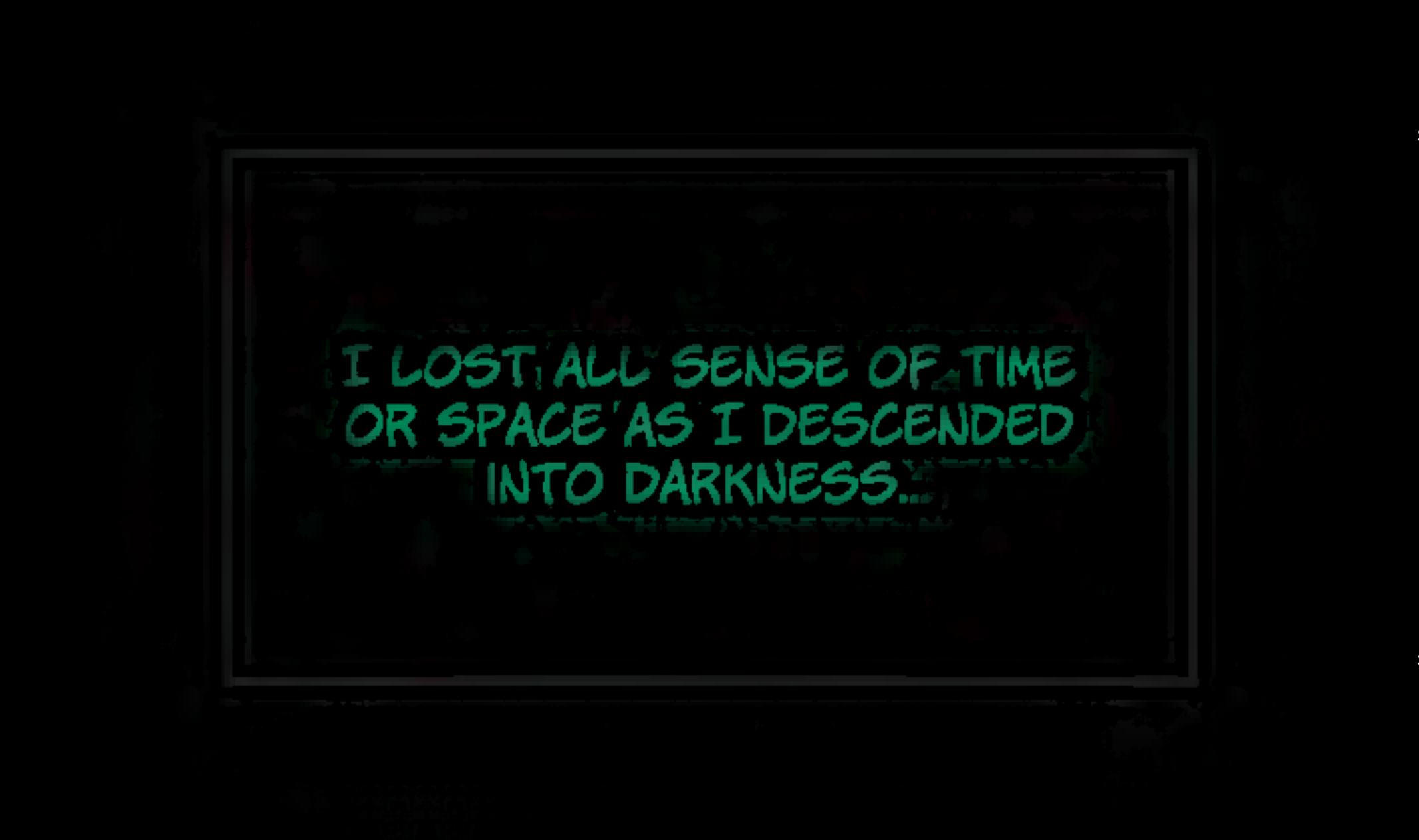
AHHHHHH

THEN
PROVE IT.

WHAT!!?

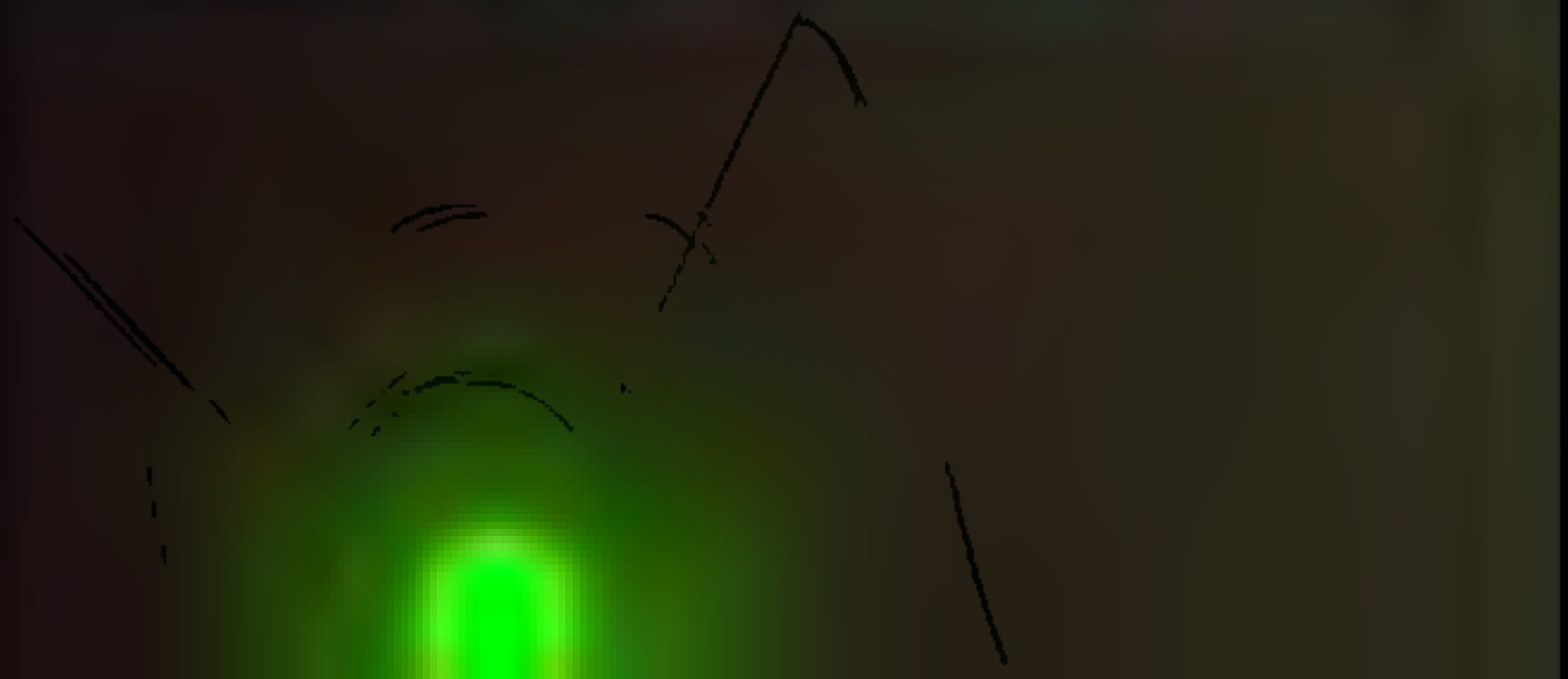


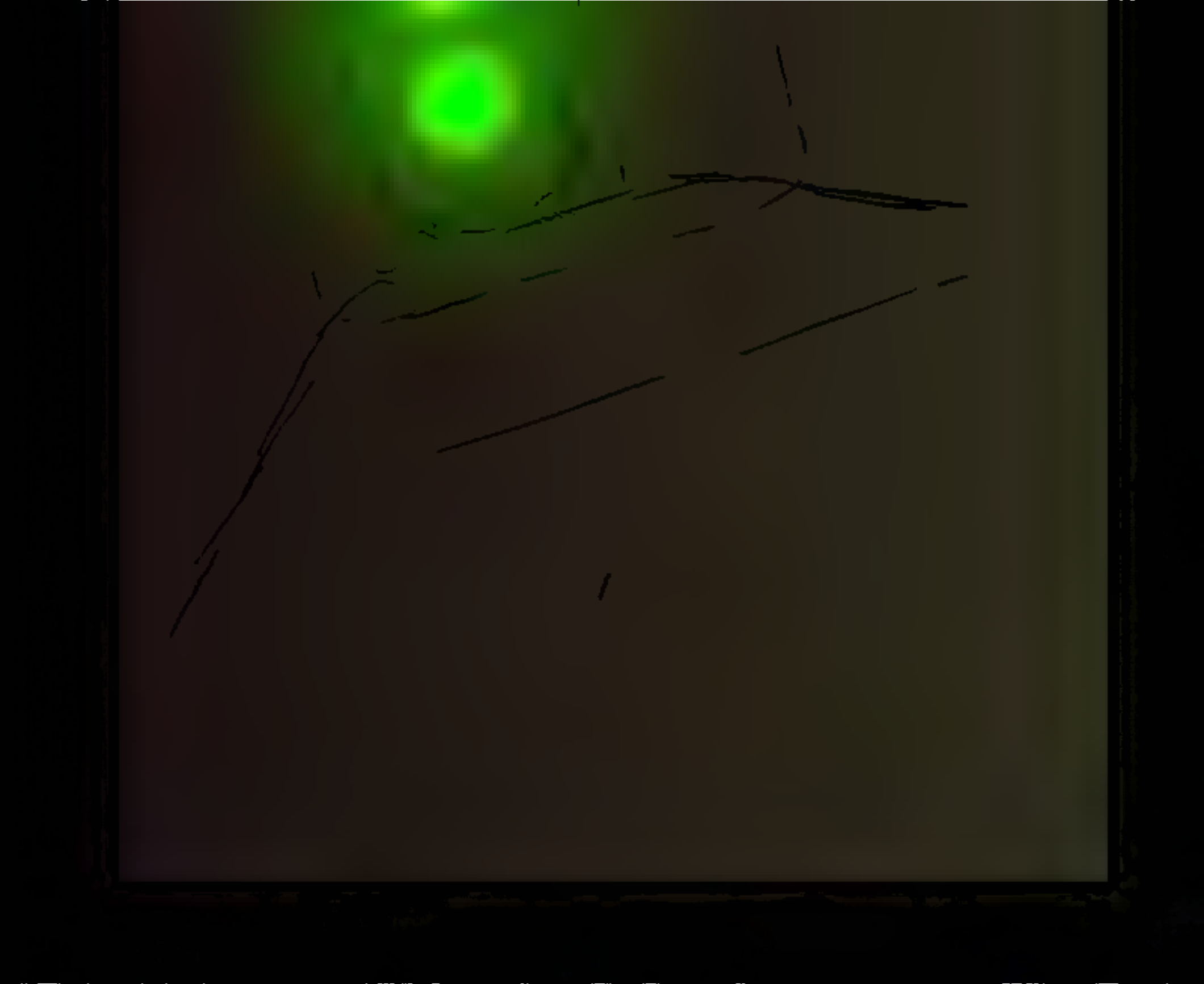
NO!!!!


I LOST ALL SENSE OF TIME
OR SPACE AS I DESCENDED
INTO DARKNESS...

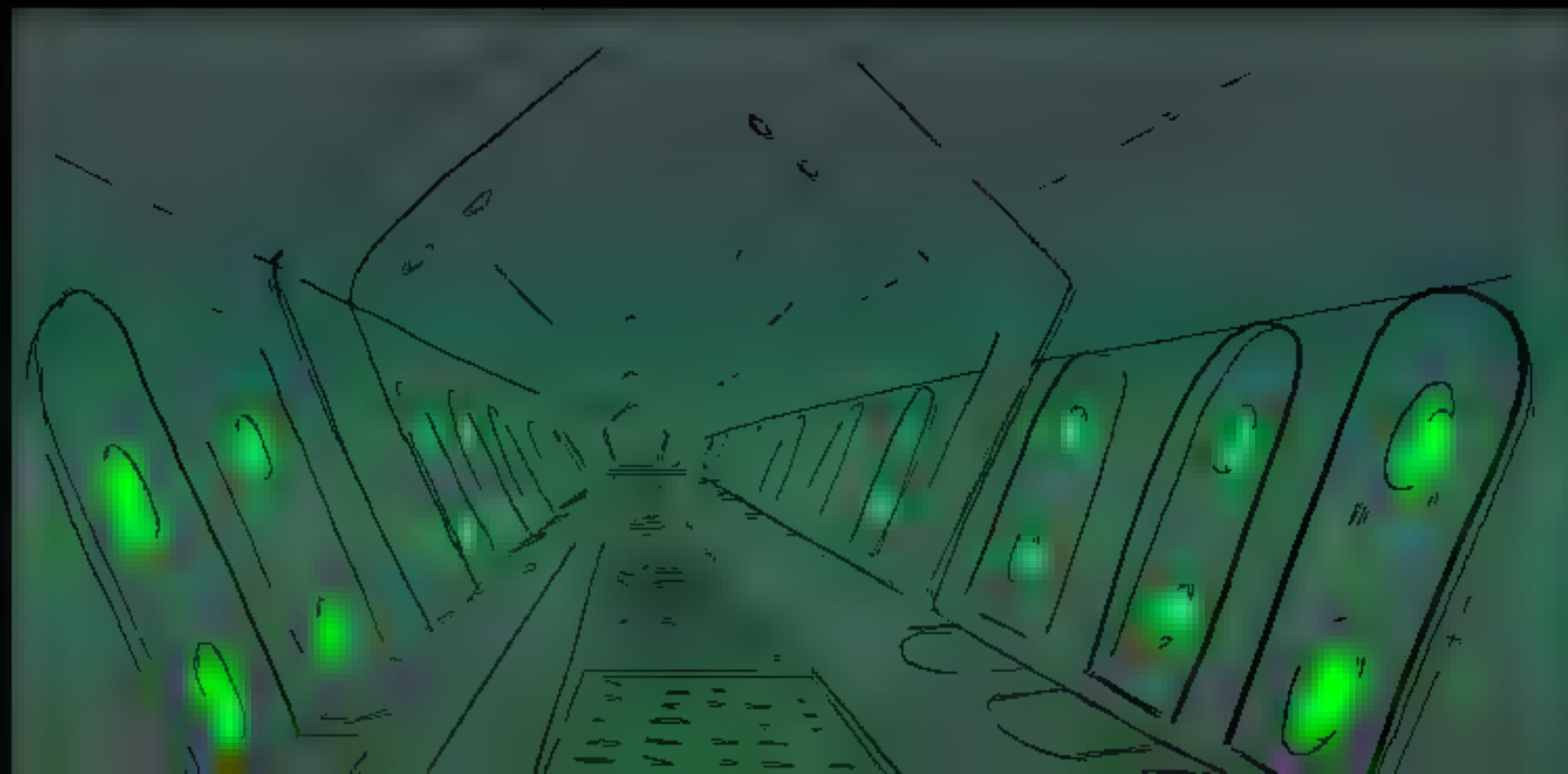
I STILL DON'T KNOW HOW MANY DAYS OR WEEKS I SPENT IN THE VOID OF OUR SHARED SUBCONSCIOUS... I CALLED IT *THE BLACK BOX.*

I THOUGHT A LOT ABOUT HOME IN THE BLACK BOX... AS TIME PASSED, I BEGAN TO SEE THE HALLS AND PASSAGEWAYS OF CAPTAIN IRO'S SHIP.

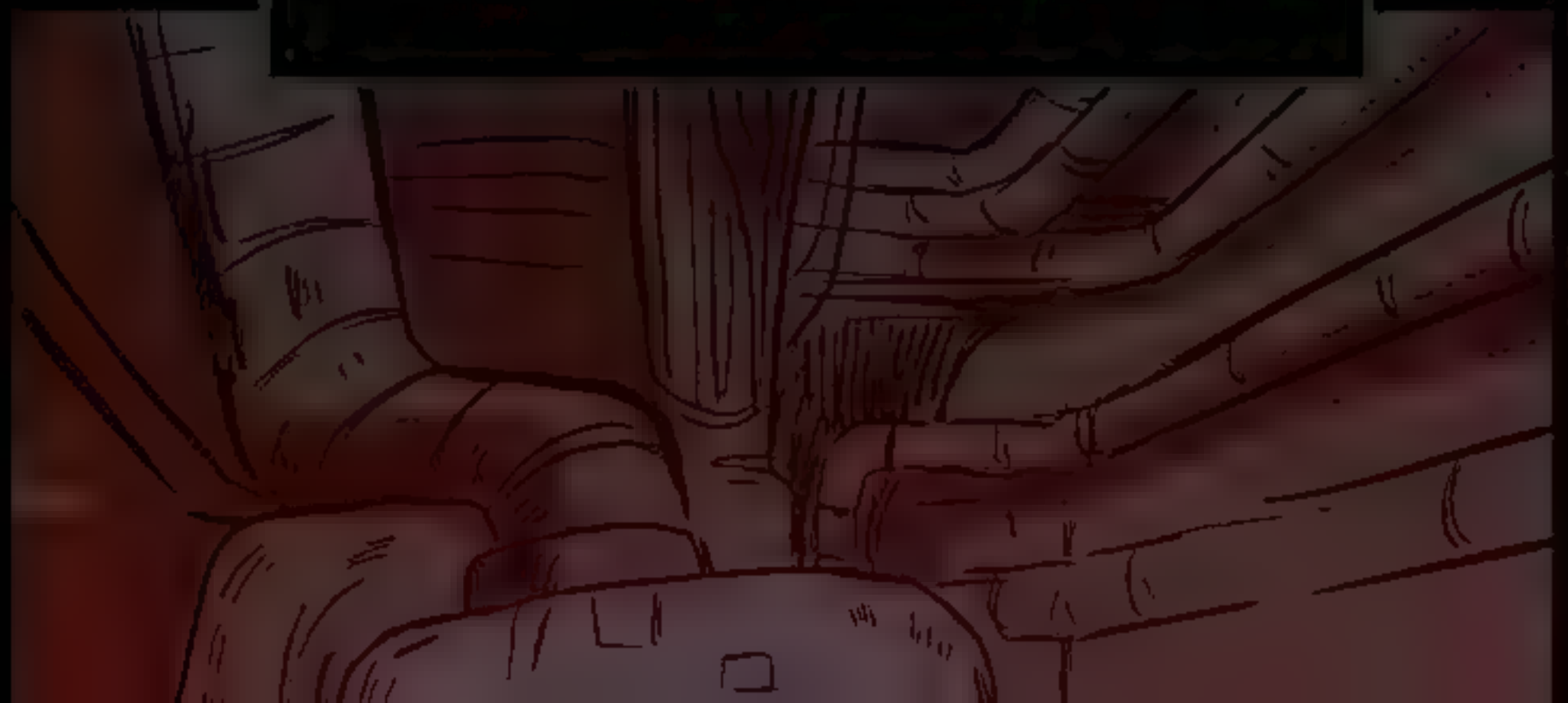




AT FIRST, I THOUGHT IT MUST BE A HALLUCINATION. BUT THE LONGER I SPENT THERE, THE MORE CLEAR EVERYTHING BECAME... AS THOUGH MY THOUGHTS WERE MATERIALIZING.



ONCE I REALIZED MY POWER, I FOUND A WAY TO TRAP MY IMPRISONER.



AND I FLED.

SHOULD WE MOVE HIM? WHAT IF MORE OF THOSE THINGS ARE ON THEIR WAY?

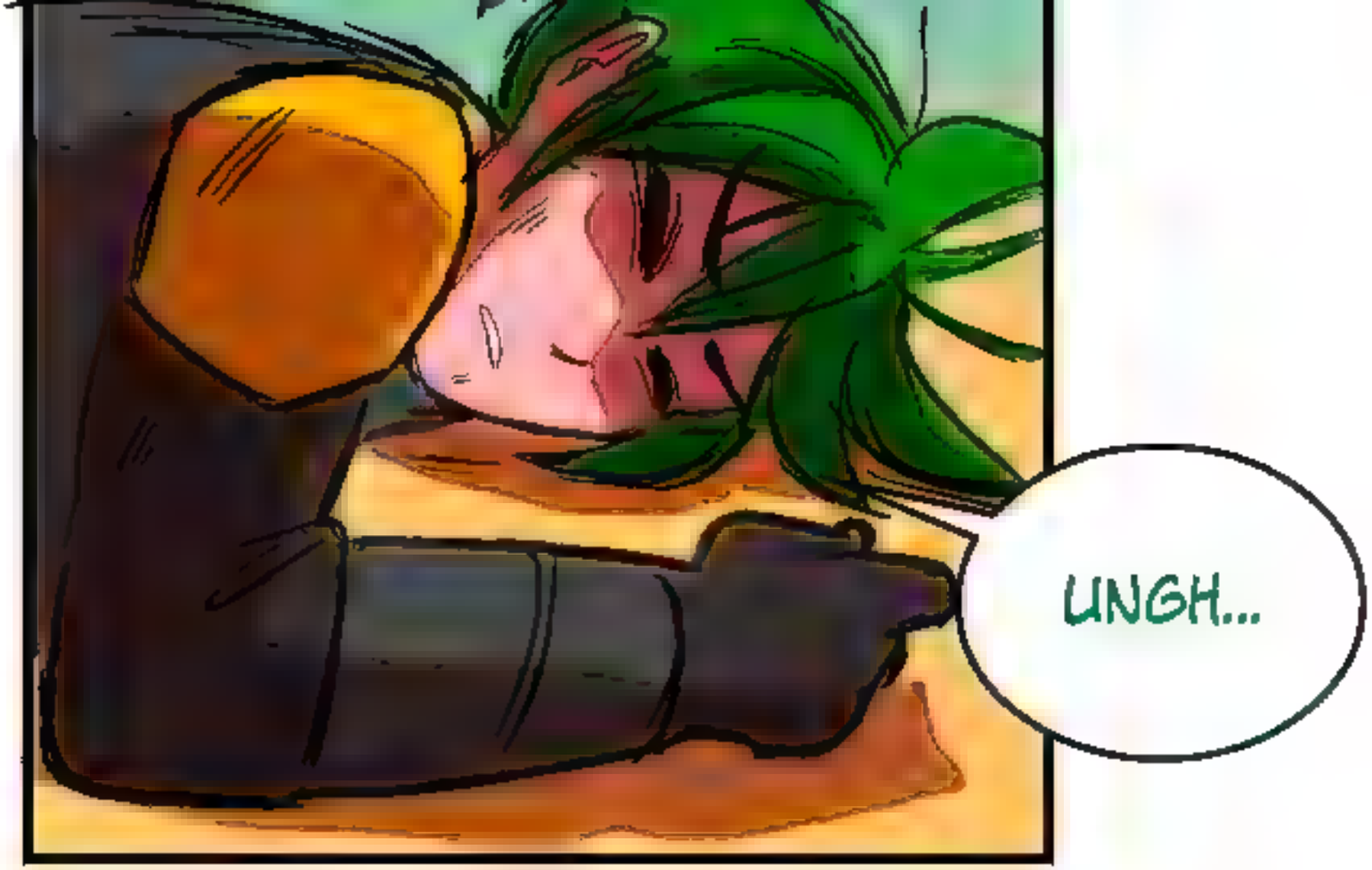
HOLD ON, IS THAT A SEVERED ARM!? HE COULD BE SOME KIND OF PSYCHO!

WITH A PRETTY FACE LIKE THAT? EVEN IF HE WERE, I'D FORGIVE HIM!

IS THAT SERIOUSLY ALL YOU THINK OF?

LIFE HAS ENOUGH UGLINESS. YOU HAVE TO APPRECIATE BEAUTY WHEN IT COMES ALONG!

THAT MIGHT HAVE SOUNDED DEEP IF YOU WEREN'T DROOLING ON HIM.

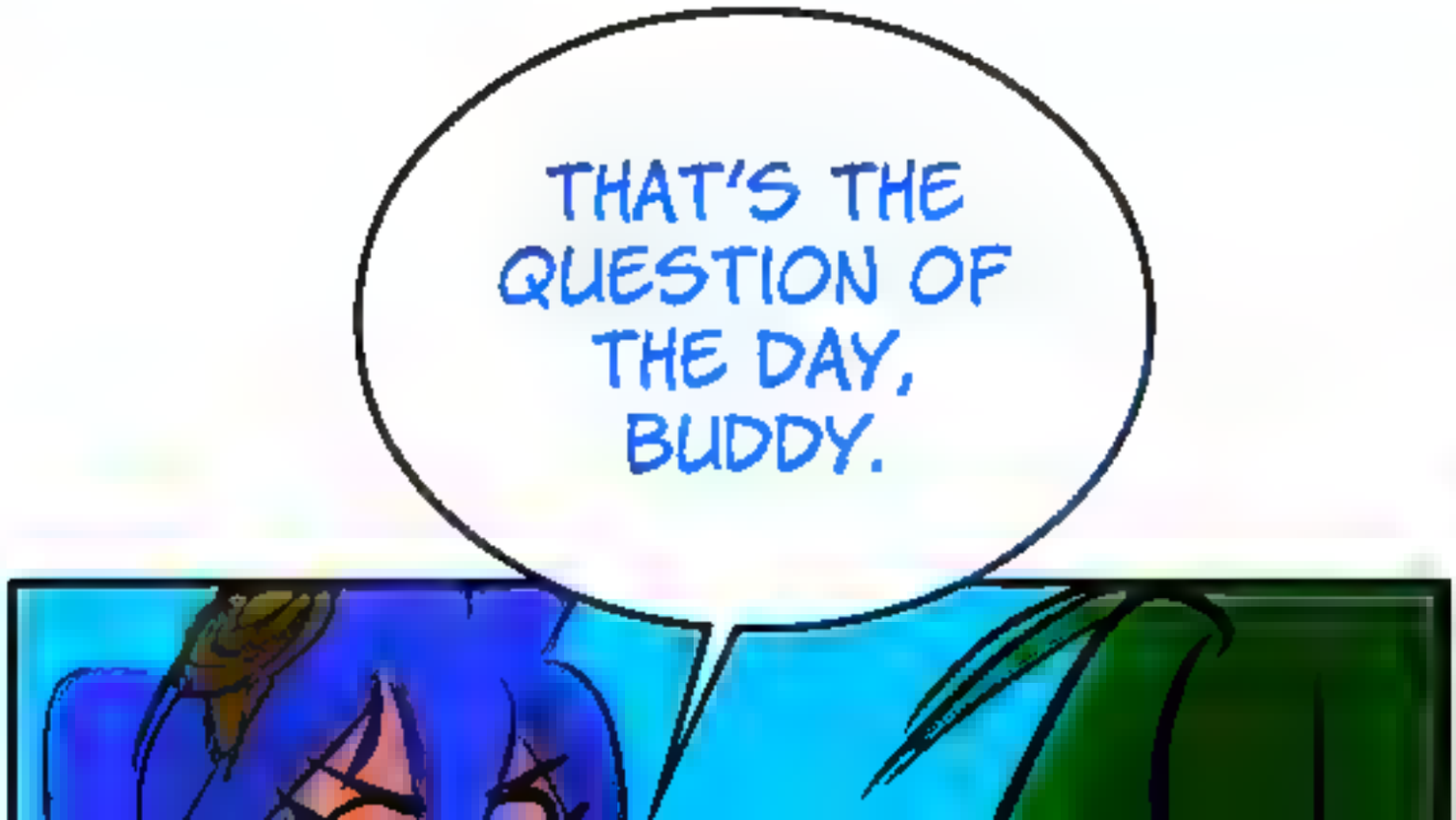

UNGH...

SH! I THINK HE'S WAKING UP!

GAGRU

GASP!!

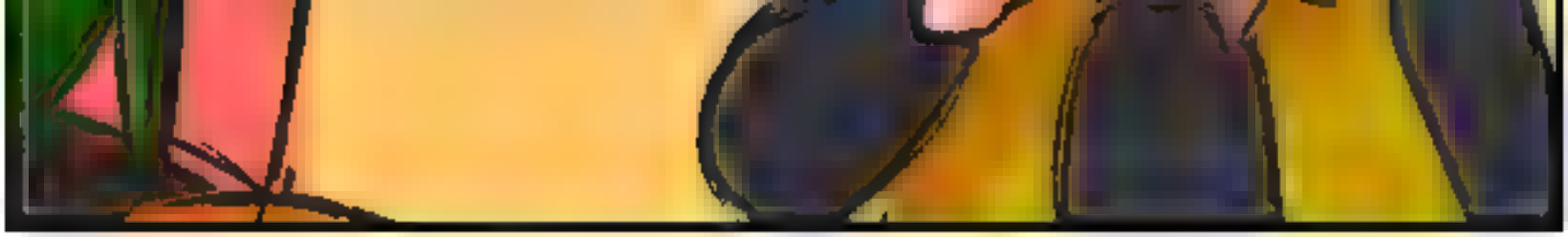
WHERE...
AM I?

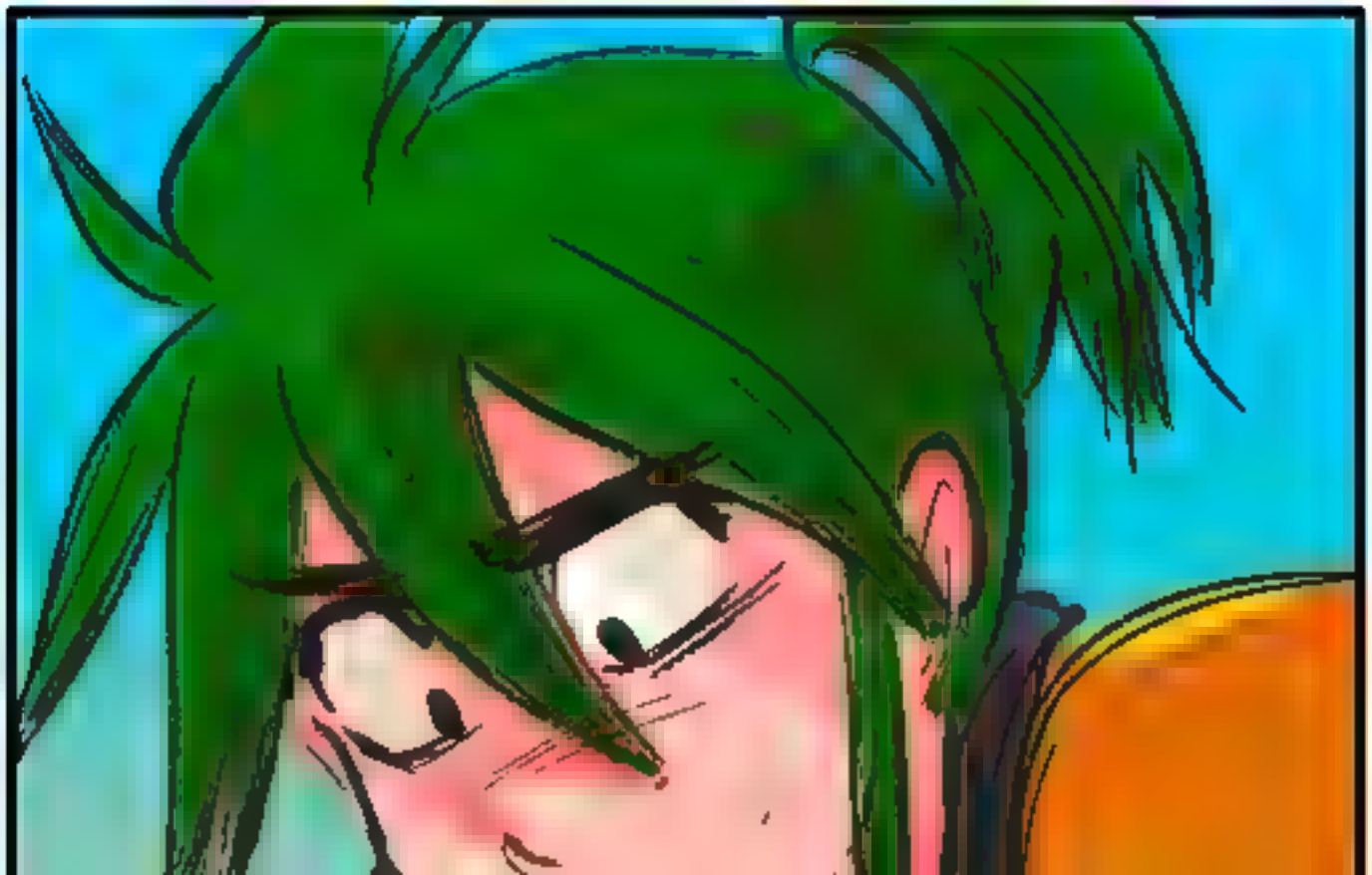

THAT'S THE QUESTION OF THE DAY, BUDDY.

WE WERE IN SOME TROUBLE HERE, AND THEN YOU SHOWED UP AND WOOSH!

WIPED 'EM ALL OUT.

DO YOU REMEMBER HOW YOU GOT HERE?

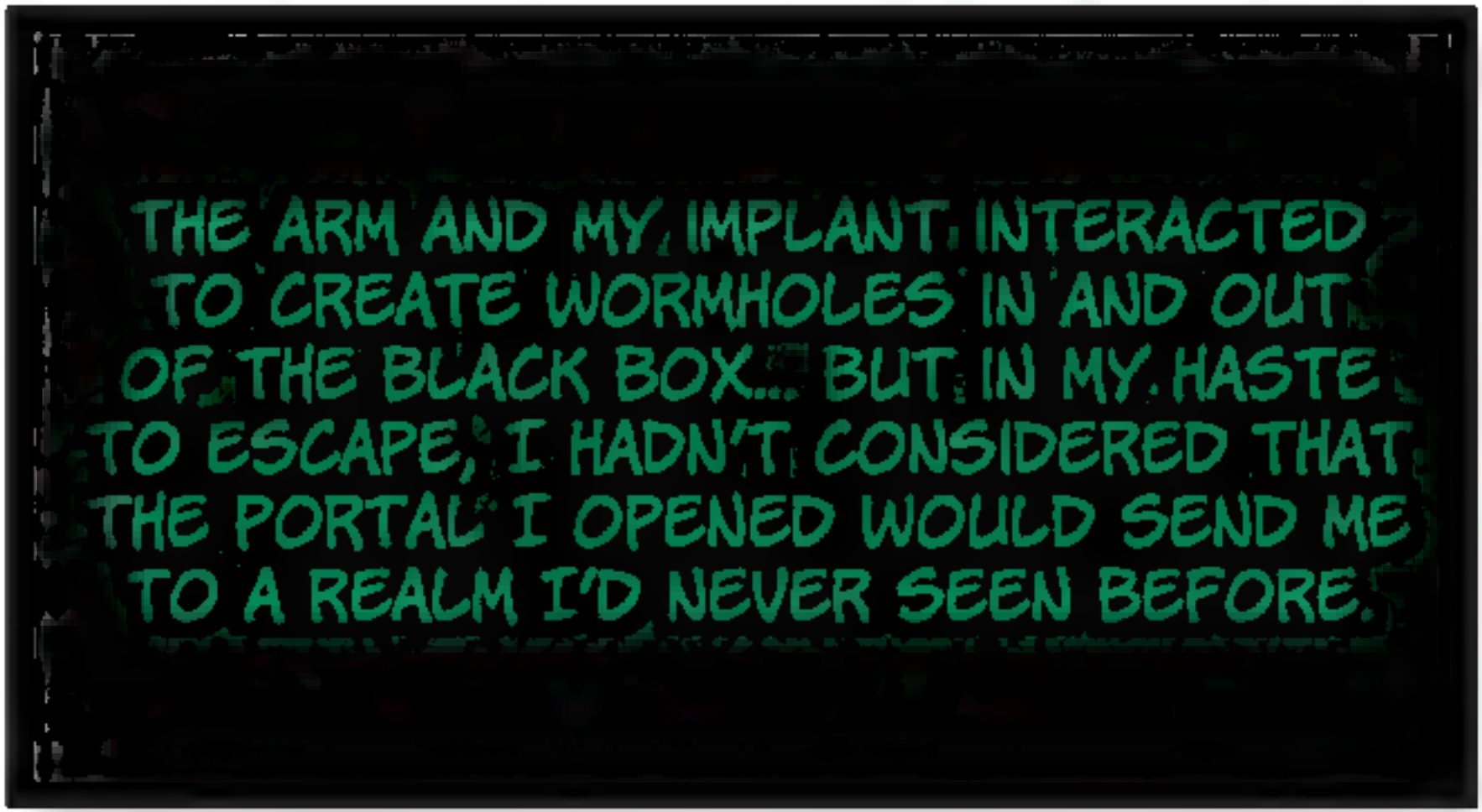




I ESCAPED...

BUT NOT TO THE RIGHT PLACE!

DOES THIS MEAN I HAVE TO GO BACK?!


THE ARM AND MY IMPLANT INTERACTED TO CREATE WORMHOLES IN AND OUT OF THE BLACK BOX... BUT IN MY HASTE TO ESCAPE, I HADN'T CONSIDERED THAT THE PORTAL I OPENED WOULD SEND ME TO A REALM I'D NEVER SEEN BEFORE.

YOU'RE A LITTLE SPOOKED, I GET IT.

WE JUST
WOKE UP HERE
NOT LONG AGO
OURSELVES

AT LEAST YOU MISSED THE CREEPY VOICE.
I'M MARIA BY THE WAY. AND THIS IS--

ALASTAIR!
AND WHAT A
PLEASURE IT IS
TO MEET YOU!

UH, GUY-RUSS...? OR IS IT GEE-RUSS...?
IT'S "JIY-RUSS"

--WAIT.
I DIDN'T TELL YOU MY NAME. HOW DO YOU--?

ABOVE YOUR HEAD. THE CONTRACT.

WE
ALL HAVE
THEM.

THEY APPEARED WHEN I PICKED UP THIS SWORD.

DON'T WORRY, I CAN'T SEE THEM EITHER.

BUT APPARENTLY I MADE A DEAL TO BE REUNITED WITH MY BROTHER.

I DON'T REMEMBER DOING IT, BUT IF I WERE EVER TO VOLUNTEER TO DO SOMETHING CRAZY FOR ANY REASON, THAT WOULD BE IT.

PLEASE GIVE THAT BACK.

OH! IS IT YOURS?

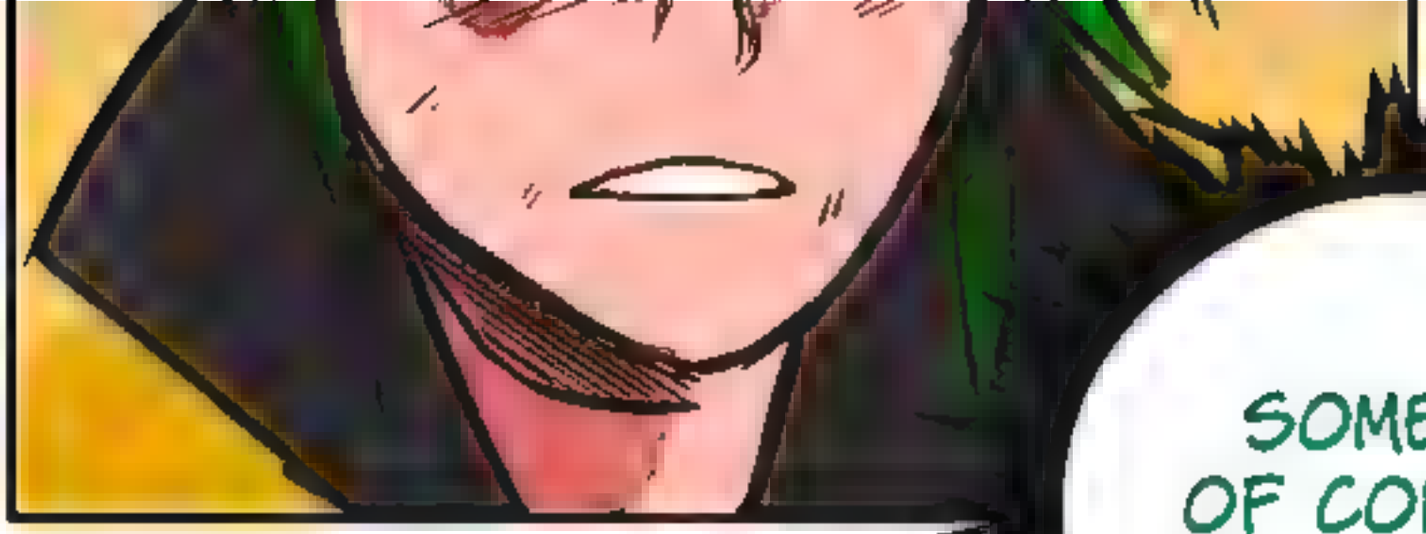
BUT OF COURSE. HONEST MISTAKE.

SWIPE

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

SINCE YOU CAN'T SEE IT, I'LL TELL YOU WHAT YOUR CONTRACT SAYS.

THIS MUST BE HIS ABILITY...



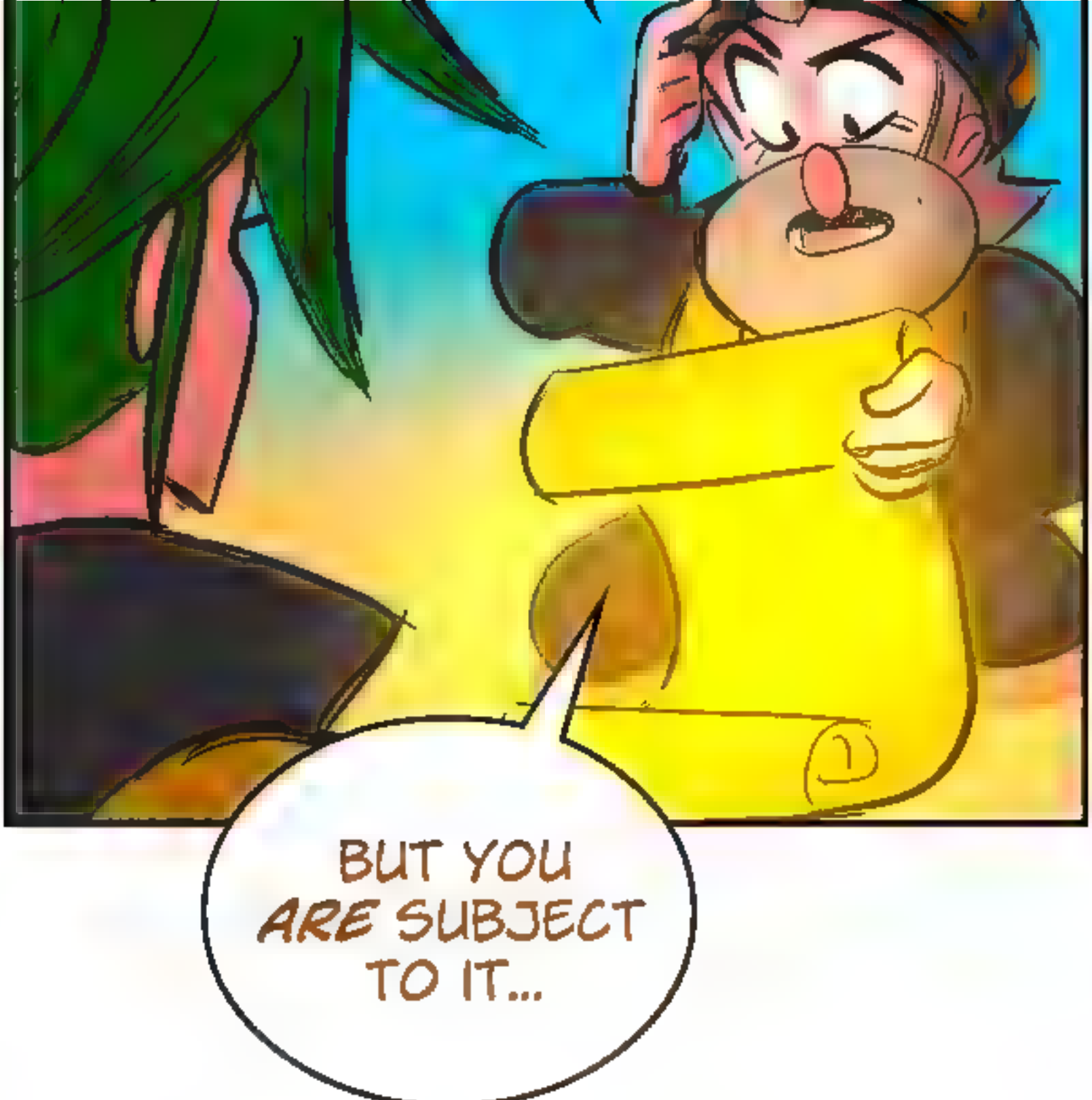
SOME KIND OF CONTRACT MANAGEMENT...

CAN HE REALLY TELL ME WHY I'M HERE?

LET'S SEE...

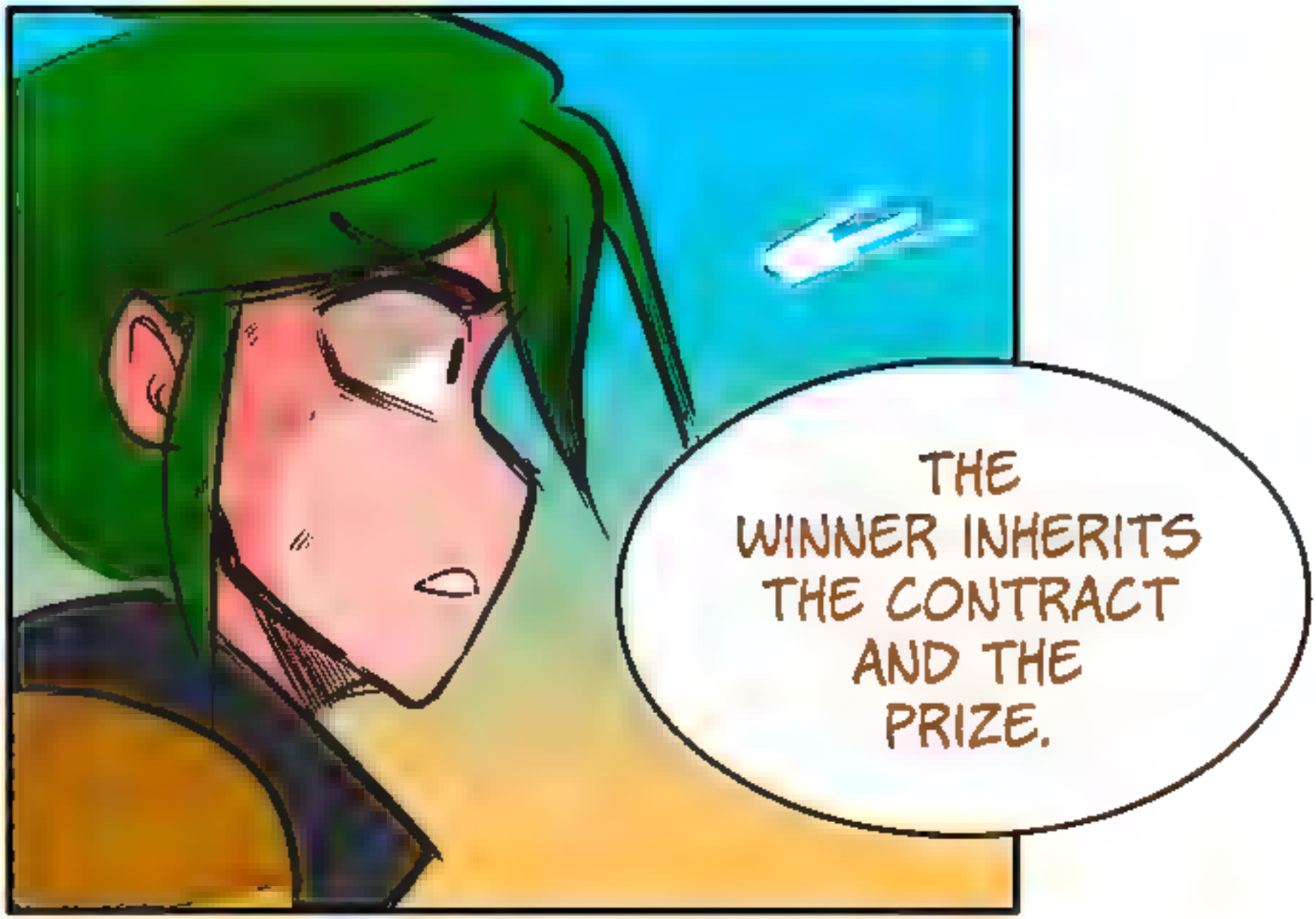
OH.
WELL THIS
IS A BIT DIFFERENT
THAN OUR CONTRACTS,
ACTUALLY.

IN WHAT WAY?
IT'S NOT EXACTLY YOUR CONTRACT...


BUT YOU
ARE SUBJECT
TO IT...

IT'S A COMPETITIVE CONTRACT BETWEEN TWO PARTIES...

IT JUST SAYS "THE SHADOW" ... AND "DON SANTIAGO".


THE WINNER INHERITS THE CONTRACT AND THE PRIZE.

I'M NOT QUIITE SURE HOW TO PUT THIS...

YOUNG MAN, YOU ARE THE PRIZE.

ROOM of
SWORDS

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